

Belmont Housing Trust
Town of Belmont
Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting date: March 24, 2005
Meeting location: Room 4, Town Hall
Time meeting commenced: 7:30 p.m.
Time meeting ended: 10:00 p.m.

Members present:

Sallye Bleiberg	yes
Roger Colton	yes
Judie Feins	yes
Jonathan Jacoby	yes
Gloria Leipzig	yes
Nancy Marsh	no
Ann Silverman	yes

Others present: none

Roger Colton opened the meeting and distributed an agenda.

Roger asked if there was anyone wishing to make a public comment to the Trust. No opportunity was requested.

The Trust received an update on the B Street development. Ann Silverman reported that the Town of Belmont and the Trust are scheduled to receive an award from Waltham Alliance to Create Housing (WATCH) for its B Street development. Members indicated that they would be available to attend to receive the award on Thursday, April 14, 2005. Roger Colton reported on construction progress. The development appears to be on-time and on-budget.

Roger Colton and Ann Silverman reported on progress toward the scheduling of the LISC-funded affordable housing forum on April 5, 2005. Ann reported that an agenda for the forum had been developed. Roger reported that invitations had been mailed to all Town Meeting Members in addition to a variety of other individuals in the Town.

Roger Colton reported that the B Street lottery is scheduled for the night of April 26, 2005 in the Board of Selectmen's room at Town Hall. Appropriate invitations to media and public officials will be distributed. Gloria Leipzig and Judie Feins were appointed to represent the Trust in discussions with WATCH to provide input on the lottery process.

Roger Colton reported on meetings with Habitat for Humanity regarding the Brighton Street home. Habitat fundraising is going well and appears to be set to meet its goal. Progress has been slow in gaining approval on the various legal documents necessary to transfer title to the land. Habitat has agreed to compensate the Town for environmental clean-up costs incurred to date. Roger reported that the Town and Habitat had agreed that any dollars raised in excess of that needed to build the Brighton Street home will be left with Belmont Savings with joint control to be exercised by the Town and Habitat.

Roger Colton reported on activities relating to Our Lady of Mercy. The Trust agreed that there should be another meeting with neighbors prior to meeting with either the Board of Selectmen or the Planning Board. That neighborhood meeting will be scheduled promptly. Roger reported on a meeting that Cliff Boehmer (architect) and he had with Jeffrey Wheeler and Tim Higgins from the Office of Community Development (OCD). Both Jeffrey and Tim were enthusiastic in their support of the Trust's proposal. Roger reported on conversations with former parishioners at Our Lady, who expressed no opposition to proceeding with a housing development. The Trust determined that it should retain both a "church scenario" and a "no-church scenario" for the time-being.

The Trust discussed its participation in the anticipated Uplands 40B process before the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Trust decided that it is best served by participating as one of the Town Committees commenting through the Town's process. The consensus of the Trust was that monitoring and enforcement of the affordable housing restrictions is best done through CHAPA. The Trust decided that it should not seek independent conversations yet with O'Neill regarding the various issues it raised in its comment letter submitted through the Office of Community Development.

Roger Colton reported on a meeting he attended with the residents of the Sandler Skate property neighborhood. The neighbors are concerned about a large-scale residential development. Informal conversations held by neighbors with Murray Sandler indicate that the developer holding the option to buy that property will seek to place up to 18 units of housing on that property. Roger indicated that he will report on future meetings between the neighbors, the developer, and Mr. Sandler.

A discussion of pending legislation supported by the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations (MACDC) was tab led.

Roger Colton reported on Belmont's receipt of funding to implement the American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI) program. Roger indicated that Jeffrey Wheeler will mail ADDI materials to each member of the Trust.

Roger Colton reported on conversations with the Office of Community Development concerning the \$472,000 that O'Neill will owe the Town for affordable housing upon the expiration of three years after the Town Meeting vote to rezone the Uplands property to commercial. Tim Higgins indicated that the right of the Town to receive the funds will vest at the end of May, 2005, but the funds are not likely to be immediately available.

A discussion was held about the need for/desirability of obtaining an appointment with the new Town Administrator, Tom Younger. Roger Colton was asked to see if arranging such a get-together was possible.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,
Roger Colton, Secretary pro temp